

My name is Angela Maria Nardolillo and I am the Founder of Off-The-Grid Missions (OTGM), the only disaster-focused NGO dedicated to providing life-saving resources to Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing people in remote and disaster-stricken regions around the world. In regions where the electrical grid is down, OTGM operates like a powerhouse to provide sustainable emergency relief specific for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Community –because when disasters strike, people who do not hear are the *first* to get cut-off from vital information, and the *last* to receive emergency relief.

Background (from: I have executed over 35 disaster-response missions worldwide; have over 10 years of experience in Disaster Preparedness and Response; 10 years in Gracie Jiu-Jitsu (lineage Rener and Ryon Gracie); and is a graduate of Advanced Leadership Special Training by Sine-Pari, a team of Military Special Ops Veterans. Angela Maria, a hard-of-hearing woman of Puerto Rican and Italian descent, was born in Europe and raised in various regions around the world.)

The missions from deployment, search and rescue, to the implementation of clean-water solutions, solar technologies, and reusable supplies. In Puerto Rico, Haiti, Bahamas, Indonesia, and in southern regions of the United States, the focus has been on hurricanes and earthquakes. In response to the Russian invasion, such operations expanded into the rescuing of Deaf families out of Ukraine. In Haiti, Lebanon, and Pakistan, OTGM has been providing ongoing emergency aid to Deaf/Hh victims of natural disasters and civil war. While each and every mission is unique, barriers in communication set the tone for every response.

Closing: the issues related to when disasters strike barriers in communication become life-threatening for Deaf, Hh people –their families (Codas); not to mention the impact it has on people with Disabilities.